

CHRIST IN THE TABERNACLE

by

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CHAPTER NINE

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

Christ — “The Bread of Life”

Exodus 25:23-30; 37:10-16; 40:22, 23; Leviticus 21:22; 22:4, 10; 24:59;
Numbers 4:7, 8; John 6:27-63

AS THE Priest entered the door of the Holy Place, he beheld on his right, just opposite the golden candlestick, the golden-covered table of shewbread; for Moses “**put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon the side of the tabernacle north ward, without the veil**” (Exodus 40:22).

With the golden altar of incense between the candlestick and the table, in line with the brazen altar and the laver of the outer court, and just before the ark of the covenant and mercy seat within the veil, the table of shewbread thus became a very important part of the “shadow of the cross” which these six pieces of furniture formed, “**according to the pattern**” given by the Lord God to Moses in the mount. As the light from the golden candlestick fell upon the table, the beauty and the symbolism of this article of furniture met the eye of the priest, while he walked before the Lord and ministered there on behalf of his people, Israel.

In order to enter this Holy Place of God’s sanctuary, he had gone by the way of the brazen altar before the gate. There he had been reminded of the necessity of the shed blood of the promised Redeemer for justification from sin.

From the brazen altar, he had passed by the brazen laver, where he had washed his hands and feet from the defilement of the desert sands before he dared go into the presence of God, “**lest he die.**”

This cleansing reminded him again that, before he could hold communion and fellowship with the Lord, his daily sins had to be confessed and put away by faith in the blood of the coming “**Lamb of God.**” That cleansing having been accomplished, the priest had entered through the door, that beautiful hanging of fine twined linen, embroidered in blue, purple, and scarlet, significant reminder of Him who was to come to open the way to God and heaven and eternal life, even the Lord Jesus.

Once within the Holy Place, the priest saw only beauty and loveliness — gold, the fine linen embroidered in figures of the cherubim, the three beautiful pieces of furniture — all illuminated by the one light which spoke of Jesus, the “**Light of the world**” and His redeemed children who are “**lights in the world.**”

The golden altar of incense was the place of worship, and a picture of Christ, the Great High Priest, who “**ever liveth to make intercession**” for His own; while the table of shewbread foretold His coming to be the “**Bread of life**” to a heart-hungry people.

What “**Glories of Christ**” did the Jewish tabernacle show forth!

- The brazen altar foretold justification by faith in His shed blood;
- The brazen laver, sanctification, cleansing from the daily defilement of sin;
- The golden candlestick, union with Christ, the “**True Light**”;
- The table of shewbread, communion and fellowship with Him who is the “**Living Bread**”;
- The golden altar, worship and prayer and praise to Him who is “**our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**”

The fellowship of the Lord God with His redeemed children, foreshadowed in the golden table of shewbread of the Jewish tabernacle, and fulfilled in and through Christ and His church — believer-priests — was “**according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord**” (Ephesians 3:11).

God has ever sought the fellowship of His creatures.

In the Garden of Eden, before sin entered to mar God’s perfect creation, He talked with man, holding communion with Adam, who was made in His “**image and likeness.**” But sin entered; and sin put man at an awful distance from God.

It caused him to turn away from his Creator in fear, hiding himself among the trees of the garden; for the unregenerate sinner cannot bear the presence of a holy God.

Thus Adam acknowledged, by his actions, that there was no common ground for fellowship with the Lord; that he had forfeited the right to talk with Him, holding communion with Him. And Adam tried to hide from God! He ran away from the Lord!

This is still the picture of the godless world — running away from God, having no desire for fellowship or communion with Him. But not so the church, the bride of Christ. Once “**dead in trespasses and sins,**” walking in time past “**according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience**” (even Satan himself); yet now the church has been “**made nigh by the blood of Christ**” (Ephesians 2:1, 2,13).

No longer afraid of God, the blood-bought bride of Christ finds joy and fellowship in communion with Him before the table which He has “**prepared,**” even Jesus, the “**Bread of Life.**”

THE TABLE OVERLAID WITH GOLD — THE PLACE OF FELLOWSHIP

It is of this fellowship and communion between Christ and His church that the table of shewbread speaks; for the priests, as we have already observed, were typical of believer-priests to-day, members of the bride and body of Christ. (See I Peter 2:9; Hebrews 13:15; Romans 12:1, 2; Revelation 1:5, 6).

The table is the place of fellowship. What well-ordered family does not look forward to the times of joyous communion around the table? There the head of the house partakes of the same food as do all the members of the family. Together they talk of the things that concern one another. And there they share a common joy.

Our loving Lord has “**prepared a table**” before us. Of that table He Himself is the Head. And upon that table He Himself has provided the food which satisfies the soul; for He Himself is the “**Bread of Life**.” He is the “**Bread of God**” (John 6:33). In Him the Father finds perfect delight; in Him He is and always was and ever will be “**well pleased**.” And in Him we, who are members of His “**household of faith**,” in the family of God, find our satisfaction and delight.

We feed upon the same spiritual food, even the Person and work of our blessed Lord, God’s Son and our Saviour. Thus the fellowship, broken by sin in the Garden of Eden, has been for ever restored.

Our holy God comes down to hold sweet communion with us — on the ground of the perfect redemptive work of His beloved Son. He feeds His soul upon the perfections of His “**only begotten Son**.” And we feed our souls upon the same perfections and immeasurable love of the holy Son of God. What fellowship!

To think that we feast upon the same spiritual food as does our omnipotent God! He finds infinite satisfaction in Christ as man’s redeemer and representative; and we are called to sit at His table, which He has prepared, to share His joy in Christ, to feed upon Him who is the delight of the heart of God!

This is the message of the golden-covered table of shew bread, which stood on the north side of the Holy Place of the Jewish tabernacle, just opposite the golden candlestick, by which it was illumined. As we behold God’s picture of it, in our lesson today, may we let the Holy Spirit take the things of Christ, and show them unto us!

First let us see the God-given “**pattern**” of this beautiful table. It is given to us in Exodus 25:23-30, while the description of the finished work is recorded in 37:10-16. In these and related passages, listed at the beginning of this lesson, we learn that it was made of incorruptible acacia wood, called “**shittim wood**” in the Authorized Version of our English Bible. This durable wood was then covered over with pure gold. It was two cubits long, one cubit wide, and one and one-half cubits high. As one cubit was about eighteen inches, the table was about thirty-six inches in length, eighteen inches in breadth, and twenty-seven inches in height.

Around the top there was a crown or rim of gold, evidently to encircle and hold securely in place the twelve loaves of shew bread, which were “**continually**” kept upon the table, even when Israel was on the march. Just outside this crown of gold, there was “**a border of an handbreadth around about,**” doubtless to hold the sacred vessels. And on the outer edge of this border was another “**golden crown**” or rim “**to the border thereof round about.**”

At the four corners were rings of gold, through which the staves were placed before Israel journeyed on the march; for by these staves the table was carried. They were also made of acacia wood, covered over with gold. This table, like all the other sacred pieces of furniture and vessels, was not to be exposed to the gaze of the outside world; nor was it to be handled by any other than the consecrated priests. The Levites carried it on the wilderness journey, but only after it had been carefully covered, and after the staves had been put through the rings of gold.

The vessels to be used at the table of shewbread were all “**of pure gold.**”

The “**dishes**” were evidently to hold the shewbread, which, we are told. Moses was to “**set upon the table**” always before the Lord (Exodus 25:29, 30; Leviticus 24:6). The “**bowls**” were doubtless for the powdered frankincense, which was to be spread over the twelve loaves of shewbread. And the “**covers**” were flagons which must have been vessels for wine used in the drink offerings mentioned in Numbers 15:1-12.

Not only was the “**bread of God**” to be placed before the Lord “**continually**”; but the twelve loaves also represented the twelve tribes of Israel.

We shall see, as we continue to search the Scriptures in this lesson that the priests were to partake of this holy bread in the Holy Place. Now the table and the bread were one! We are not to think of them as separate the one from the other. Both speak to us of our Lord.

- The incorruptible wood once again reminds us of His sinless humanity;
- The gold, of His eternal glory and deity;
- The bread, of satisfaction for the heart of His Heavenly Father and for the hearts of His blood-bought children.

Now the twelve tribes were all represented at the table — a loaf for each tribe, and these loaves were encircled with a crown of gold. What a picture of our eternal security in Him who is the “**Living Bread**”!

Even as Israel journeyed on the march, the loaves were still to be upon the table “**continually**” (Numbers 4:7, 8). Covered by the priests with “**a cloth of blue,**” over which were spread “**a cloth of scarlet**” and “**a covering of badgers’ skins,**” the “**continual shewbread**” (II Chronicles 2:4), together with all the holy vessels, was still to “**be thereon.**”

But the loaves could not fall off the table; they could not be moved; because they were encircled by a crown of gold!

My Christian friend, as we journey through the wilderness of this world, from Egypt to Canaan, as it were, we cannot fall from our Father's omnipotent safekeeping! The gold of His eternal deity insures that; for He is **"able to keep"** us **"from falling,"** and to present us **"faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy"** (Jude 24)¹ We are kept by His everlasting love!

As the priests covered the holy table of shewbread, in preparation for the march, they were reminded by the cloth of blue of the heavenly character of Him, upon whom their souls were to feed. By the cloth of scarlet they could foresee the costly price of their redemption by His own precious blood. And by the covering of badgers' skins, they could tell that this heavenly One was to come down, in the form of a servant, the Man, Christ Jesus.

Just how much of this beautiful symbolism the priests in the wilderness could actually understand, we cannot tell; but living on this side of the cross, we who are members of the bride of Christ can see these things clearly. This we do know: The priests in Israel and Moses and every saved soul before the cross — all were redeemed by faith in the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world.

The shedding of blood from the time of Abel; yes, from the time when God provided **"coats of skins"** to clothe Adam and Eve pointed on to Jesus, **"the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). Concerning Abraham, who lived some two thousand years before Christ, our Lord said, as He was talking to the unbelieving Jews,

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56).

Abraham saw the day of Christ by faith; even as Moses did in the keeping of the Passover and in the beautiful tabernacle, the pattern for which God gave him in the mount; and even as the priests did, as they ministered before the Lord in this sanctuary for the Lord God **"in the midst"** of His chosen people, Israel.

THE SHEWBREAD — A TYPE OF CHRIST, "THE BREAD OF LIFE"

The word "shewbread," means, when literally translated from the Hebrew, *"the bread of the face"*; that is, *"the bread of the presence."* Therefore, it was also called *"the presence bread."* We have seen that, by express command of the Lord, it was **"continually"** before His Presence.

He looked upon it with satisfaction because it foreshadowed His beloved Son who always did those things that pleased Him. Because all twelve of the tribes of Israel were represented in the twelve loaves, *"the presence bread"* reminded the Lord also of His people. There they were, symbolically face to face with God, in fellowship with Him on the basis of the atoning work of God's Son upon the cross. Had not Abraham, when returning from the deliverance of his nephew, Lot, met Melchizedek, who **"brought forth bread and wine"**? (See Genesis 14:18-20). This **"king of Salem"** and **"priest of the most high God"** was a marvelous type of Christ, our King-Priest. And because Abraham had faith in the promised Redeemer, he could partake of the memorials of sacrifice, the bread and the wine, in fellowship with Melchizedek, unmistakable type of the Lord Himself. (See Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1-28).

The Lord God looked upon the shewbread, and was satisfied in His Son, of whom the loaves spoke. And He saw us, the bride of Christ, “**accepted in the beloved**” Son. For “*the presence bread*” foreshadowed our Lord Jesus, the true Bread, who sustains us in our new life, satisfies our heart-hungry souls, and fills us with the joy of His never-failing Presence.

“**Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ**” (I John 1:3).

“**Jesus said unto them . . . My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world . . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst**” (John 6:32-35).

When our Lord died upon the cross and rose again, He who was “**the Bread of God**” became also the believer’s “**Bread of Life**.” Ever well pleasing “**before the Lord**,” His believer-priests feed their souls upon Him; and thus the fellowship which was broken by sin has been restored between the Lord and His believing children.

Now if we turn to the Holy Spirit’s description of this shewbread, we shall find some striking and significant details, which unmistakably remind us of our Lord.

- This holy bread was to be made of fine flour, without leaven.
- It was to be baked with fire.
- Then the loaves were to be placed in two parallel rows upon the table, within the encircling crown of gold.
- Upon the twelve loaves powdered frankincense was sprinkled.
- And there the shewbread stood “**before the Lord**” for seven days.

On each Sabbath day the priests placed this sweet frank incense in one of the golden bowls, which belonged to the service of the table; and burned it as “**an offering made by fire unto the Lord**” (Leviticus 24:7). These loaves were then food for the priests, fresh loaves being put in their place “**before the Lord**.” Aaron and his sons were to eat this holy bread, but only within the Holy Place (Leviticus 24:9).

Seven is the number of perfection.

- God gave us seven days in the week.
- He placed seven colors in the rainbow.
- Seven, we believe, is the divine number of periods, during which He has dealt with man and will yet deal with him, even unto the eternal state.
- For seven days the holy bread, which prefigured the sinless Bread of Life, stood “**before the Lord**” on the gold-covered table in the Holy Place, just another symbol of the divine perfection of Him who is the True Bread.

But let us examine more closely the ingredients which went into this holy bread, as well as the one which was expressly excluded by the Lord God:

1. The Fine Flour — A Type of Christ's Perfect Humanity.

How soft and white is fine flour! Did you ever hold it between your fingers, just to feel its smooth texture? You felt no roughness, no unevenness, only a soft, smooth, even substance. As someone has expressed it, "Fine flour is bread corn which has been bruised until it is smooth and even. Christ is the bread corn bruised, and in Him is no roughness or unevenness" (Rodgers).

His spotless humanity had nothing in it to mar it, because it was flawless, absolutely without sin. That is why His Father in heaven was always well pleased with His Son. That is why even His enemies could find no fault with Him.

That is why He Himself could challenge those who sought to kill Him to "**convict him of sin.**" He was "**holy, harmless** [i.e., 'guileless'], **undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens**" (Hebrews 7:26).

No wonder He was rightly called "**the Bread of God**"!

2. The Absence of Leaven — A Type of Christ's Sinlessness.

As if to emphasize the sinless nature of His Son, of whom the shewbread spoke, the Lord expressly commanded that no leaven be put into the holy bread.

Now some people teach that leaven is a symbol of the gospel, and that the church will convert the world. Just a few days ago I heard one of the leaders of rationalistic teaching say as much over the radio — and over a nationwide hookup, too!

But this man who preaches in so-called evangelical pulpits does not believe in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the virgin birth of our Lord, His vicarious atonement for sin, His bodily resurrection, or His coming again in glory — personally, visibly, bodily. Not all who teach that leaven is a type of the gospel are skeptical concerning the way of salvation; thank God for that! But practically all, if indeed not all of them, deny the bodily, imminent, visible return of Christ in glory, to bring in His own kingdom. They try to spiritualize His second coming; and in this we believe they pervert this "**blessed hope**" of the Christian. Moreover, every single reference in the Bible to leaven suggests evil.

This holy bread was to be made without leaven.

During the feast of unleavened bread all leaven was to be put out of every house in Israel. Our Lord warned His disciples against the "**leaven of the scribes and Pharisees**," by which they understood Him to mean their "**doctrine**," or teaching. The apostles wrote of "**the leaven of malice and wickedness**," and exhorted Christians to "**purge out the old leaven**."

And the whole of the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, where the woman is pictured as hiding leaven in three measures of meal, presents the course of this church age.

All seven of our Lord's parables recorded in this remarkable chapter tell the same story — that the church began with a few believers, and that it would grow into a great system, in which would be found the true and the false, the wheat and the tares, the good fish and the bad, true believers on the Lord Jesus and hypocrites who bear His name, yet deny the blood of His cross.

In this very chapter, which, we believe, is misinterpreted by those who make the leaven symbolize the gospel, the woman hides the leaven in the meal until the whole is leavened. What a picture of the insidious, permeating influence of apostasy in professing Christendom today!

Yes; invariably the Word of God pictures leaven as a symbol of sin. (See Matthew 16:6-12; I Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 5:9; Matthew 13:33; Mark. 8:15; Luke 12:1).

Surely we need not quote further Scripture to prove that our Lord Himself was ever, always, without sin!

In His Person there was only light without darkness. In Him was only good, without evil. That is why the Father could delight in the Son. And that is why He expressly commanded Moses not to put leaven in the holy bread that stood **“before the Lord,”** for leaven is the symbol of sin.

3. The Baking with Fire — A Type of Christ's Suffering for Sinners.

Even as the twelve loaves of the shewbread were baked with fire, so also our Lord stood the fires of testing and suffering, that we might be saved. The fire of God's holiness searched and tested Him, and found Him absolutely holy. That is why He could die upon the cross as the perfect substitute for sinful man. Into the agony of His sinless soul we cannot fully enter, for we are sinful by nature. But we can thank Him for His love and grace!

4. The Frankincense — A Type of Christ's Fragrant Life.

Frankincense is a sweet gum; and when it was burned upon the altar, as **“an offering made by fire unto the Lord,”** it went up before Him as a sweetsmelling savour.

What a picture of the loveliness and beauty and fragrance of His matchless life! His very name is precious to the Father! Is it the most precious name in heaven or on earth to you, my friend? The wicked Jews of His day called Him **“Beelzebub,”** the prince of demons, even Satan himself. What blasphemy! Do you know Him as your Saviour and Lord and Friend? One day men, angels, and demons will have to acknowledge what the born again child of God delights to proclaim today, that **“His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace”** (Isaiah 9:6). The Father calls Him His **“beloved Son”**!

This is the God-given description of the holy bread which was placed by the priests each Sabbath day upon the golden-covered table in the Holy Place of the sanctuary; and this, we believe, is the scriptural interpretation of its beautiful symbolism.

There was satisfaction for the representatives of all God's people; for no tribe was overlooked. There is satisfaction in Christ for all the world!

As the table and the bread were one; and as the **"Bread of God"** became food for the priests, even so we are complete in Christ Jesus.

The fragrant frankincense of His life is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, if we let Him fill our very being; and the Father sees us **"accepted"** in Him, complete in Him. We are united to Him; one body, of which He is the Head; His bride, of whom He is the heavenly Bridegroom. In Him we find daily nourishment for our souls, constant fellowship at His table, because He was **"the corn of wheat"** which was "ground in the mill of suffering and brought into the fire of judgment" to take our place on Calvary's cross (*Scofield Reference Bible*, page 102). Truly we can say, with the Apostle Paul,

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

To believe His Word, and to accept Him personally as Saviour and Lord, is to **"eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood"** (John 6:63; cf. 6:51-63). To appropriate His gift of eternal life is to feed our souls upon the Living Bread, which came down from heaven. But how starved we are spiritually!

Many of God's people who would never think of missing a meal of physical food three times a day, let whole weeks and months pass without more than a cursory reading of the living Word of God which speaks of the Bread of Life. How can Christians **"grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"** unless they feed upon His Word? (See II Peter 3:18).

May God help us not to starve our souls! The more we read the Bible, the more we love it. The more we love it, the more wonderful it becomes to our hearts. Why do we neglect it so? Only because we let Satan crowd other things in its place. That should not be so — if we truly love the Lord.

"THE BREAD OF GOD" — FOOD FOR THE PRIESTS

We have seen from our study today that this holy bread became food for the priests, and that they were to eat it in the Holy Place. Thus it becomes a beautiful symbol of the **"table"** which the Lord has **"prepared"** for us in memory of His broken body and shed blood — **"till He come."** It is the **"Lord's Table,"** not ours. We are His invited guests; He has provided the bounty. We sit at His table to hold sweet fellowship and communion with Him. It is **"a pure table";** the bread is **"holy."** Moreover, it is to be eaten only in the Holy Place, as it were.

Accordingly, God expressly commanded that certain persons could not partake of the shewbread:

- No stranger,
- No sojourner,
- No hired servant,
- No priest with a running sore could eat the holy bread.

What a picture for us, as Christians!

No stranger, no one who denies the blood of our Lord Jesus, should dare go to the Lord's Table to partake of the Lord's Supper; yet our own country is filled with many professing Christians who do this very thing — belong to churches and sit at the Lord's Table, yet deny the Lord who bought them!

God does not honor such wickedness.

No sojourner, no passing friend, could partake; neither should any guest or member of a believer's household go to the Lord's Table except by personal faith in Him of whom it speaks.

No hired servant in Israel could eat the holy bread; neither can we appreciate the meaning of the Lord's Supper if we are trying to work for our salvation. We are saved by grace through faith, not by our own paltry works.

No priest with a running sore could eat the holy bread; and God tells us in the epistles that we must approach the Lord's Table in full confession of all defilement of sin; we must put all sin under the blood of Christ, or else we eat "**unworthily**." The priest with a running sore was a priest still; once saved, we are always saved. But it is possible for us to be saved, yet miss God's richest blessing by unconfessed sin in our lives.

Let us read prayerfully Leviticus 22: 4, 10 to see God's commands concerning this vital matter; then let us examine our own souls as we apply the message to our own hearts.

The Church at Corinth had sinned in going to the Lord's Table to eat and drink (I Corinthians 11:20-22); and for this gross iniquity Paul severely rebuked them. Then he went on to explain to them the true meaning of this sacred memorial, saying, in part,

"As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Corinthians 11:26).

Thank God! This memorial feast will one day be done away; for we shall not need these emblems to remind us of the broken body and shed blood of the Son of God! We shall see Him as He is, look upon His face — and be like Him — for all the endless ages! But meanwhile, let us sacredly guard the significance of this blessed memorial, lest we bring reproach upon the holy name we bear.

The shewbread cost the priests nothing; nor did our salvation cost us anything! It cost the Father an awful price! It cost the Son of God a terrible price! But the Bread of Life is free to all the world, "**without money and without price**" (Isaiah 55:1)!

Only the priests could eat the holy bread; and they had to go by the way of the brazen altar of sacrifice and the brazen laver, in order to enter the Holy Place, where they partook of this sacred thing. But, while no priest with a running sore could partake; yet it is beautiful to note that the priest who was lame or blind or deformed in any way was not excluded from the table. He could not serve God there, but he could eat the holy bread. (See Leviticus 21:22; cf. 21:17-23).

I wonder if our spiritual lameness is hindering our service for the Lord? Yet, however faltering, however weak, however stumbling, our testimony is for Christ; if we are truly born again by faith in His shed blood, we are invited to sit at His Table, **“prepared”** by Him for His own. Moreover, we are exhorted to encourage the weak, to strengthen them in the faith, that they may grow more and more like our Lord. (See Romans 14:1; I Thessalonians 5:14; Hebrews 12:12, 13).

Israel’s priests partook of the holy bread as they journeyed in **“the howling wilderness.”**

We, too, are in a godless world; the tempests and storms of life would discourage us and lead us to despair. Our own lameness and sinfulness would drag us down; but our Lord invites us to His Table — to remember Him in His sufferings for us, **“till He come.”** Meeting Him there, we take fresh courage; we see His almighty power, and His never dying love — all exercised for us. Then we **“thank God, and take courage.”** He is a wonderful Saviour!

Many centuries ago there lived a lame man who sat at a king’s table. His name was Mephibosheth; his father, Jonathan, the devoted friend of David, the king. When Saul and Jonathan were killed in the battle on Mount Gilboa, tidings of their death reached the nurse of little Mephibosheth, who was just five years old. She picked him up and fled, fearing lest he should be killed because he was of Saul’s household; and when she fled, she dropped the child, and he became lame for the rest of his life.

The years passed. David’s wars were over for a time. He remembered his covenant with Jonathan, and asked, **“Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”**

And he was told of Mephibosheth. He sent for the young man, who in turn was afraid, lest the king should kill him. He had been in hiding, dwelling in Lodebar, *“the place of no pasture.”* Tremblingly he went before the king, and from David himself heard the reassuring words of welcome to the king’s own table. And at the king’s table he sat **“as one of the king’s sons.”** Yet he was **“lame on both his feet.”** But as he sat at the king’s table, his lame feet were hidden from view. Was he not counted as one of the king’s sons? (See II Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13).

Nearly two thousand years ago, God looked for some to whom He might show kindness for the sake of Another. For Jesus’ sake He loved us with an everlasting love. He sought us out when we were lame, helpless to fight against the enemy of our souls, hiding from His holy Presence in fear and dread. He brought us into His **“banqueting house,”** and **“his banner over”** us **“was love”** (Song of Solomon 2:4).

He invited us to the King's Table, bidding us become the **"sons of God,"** by believing in the name of His well-beloved Son. And as we are seated at His Table, all our imperfections, all our lameness, all our frailties are hidden, covered by the precious blood of the Son of God, who is Himself the King. What love! What grace!

Shall we not show our love for Him by going out into the highways and byways, to tell the millions of others of His gracious invitation to sit at the King's Table? We shall as His never dying love fills our souls, as the Living Bread satisfies and strengthens our hearts, enabling us to heed His great commission,

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you . . ."

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (John 20:21; Mark 16:15).

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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